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THE TWO PRE-RAPHAELITISMS.

THIRD ARTICLE.

THE MODERN PRE-RAPHAELITES.

HAVING now completed our review of the early Pre-Raphaelite painters; having shown to the best of our ability in what the great and broad characteristics of each lay, what distinguished them as a body from their successors, and what were the main objects of their pursuits in painting;—how their devout-fervor led them successfully to combat against some of the greatest difficulties which can possibly beset the practice of an art. Having endeavored to do this, we say, it will now become our task to give some account of that modern school which has attempted to carry out the work in the spirit which animated their elder namesakes: bringing to their object all that knowledge which four centuries have given, and uniting a broader aim with as deep a purpose, have striven to reinstate the art of painting in its proper nobility of position.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, called more familiarly from their initials the "P-R. B.," consisted originally of seven young men, five of whom were painters (one of whom has since seceded from causes unconnected with art), a sculptor, Thomas Woolner, and a gentleman, who, although not an artist, is now known as a distinguished art critic, whose writings are to be found monthly in the "Crayon," as well as in the English journals of Art and Literature. Of the four painters who remained after the secession stated, three have now distinguished names, which are known wherever English Art is spoken of—Messrs. Millais, Holman Hunt, and Dante Rossetti. If we were called on to state the characteristics of each, we should say that the first possessed a singularly brilliant dramatic power, with a wonderful gift of color;—the second, a concentrated, solid, earnest vigor, with a more complete system of execution than either of the others;—the third, a genius of extraordinary calibre, delighting chiefly in subtle and spiritual subjects which seem to fit no other hand. We do not mean to say that either of them are deficient in any of the highest qualities of an artist; for the color of Rossetti's works is as fine as that of Millais', and the learned drawing and executive power of Hunt perhaps surpasses that of the other two:—they are respectively gorgeous, profound, refined and tender, wise, and subtle to an eminent degree. The very names of the subjects they have each chosen will show, in some degree, the peculiar qualities of either mind. Those by which Millais is chiefly known are, "The Death of Ophelia," "Ferdinand listening to Ariel," from "The Tempest,"

"The Order of Release,"—a wife delivering her husband from prison. "The Rescue,"—a fireman bringing children from a burning house, and delivering them to their mother; "The Proscribed Cavalier,"—a lady visiting her lover in hiding in a hollow tree; "The Huguenot,"—a lady endeavoring to bind a scarf round the arm of her Huguenot lover, which was the agreed distinguishing mark for Roman Catholics at the time of the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew. "Mariana of the Moated Grange," from Tennyson;—"The Return of the Dove to the Ark;" "The Burning of Autumn Leaves,"—some children gathering and destroying a heap of leaves.—"Peace Concluded, 1856."—a matrimonia reconciliation; "The Blind Girl," etc.

Holman Hunt's principal pictures have been—"A Christian Missionary receiving shelter from the Persecution of the Druids;"—"Valentine receiving Sylvia from Proteus," from the "Two Gentlemen of Verona;" "The Hireling Shepherd,"—a shepherd who neglects his flock to make love to a country girl; they wander among the young corn and into miry places: "The Awakening Conscience,"—a light woman recalled to thoughts of her lost innocence by music; "The Light of the World,"—the Saviour, in early dawn knocking at the door of a neglected house;—"Behold I stand at the door and knock," Rev. II.: 20; "Claudio and Isabella,"—the prison scene in "Measure for Measure;" "The Scapegoat,"—Leviticus XVI. Dante Rossetti's works have been—"The Girlhood of the Virgin;" "The Annunciation," and very numerous water-color drawings, mainly from the "Divine Comedy" of Dante. These works, though from their very nature, less known than those by his brethren, will ever suffice to place him in a most honorable place beside them.

These have been the chief labors of the English Pre-Raphaelites; with very few exceptions they have been works which exhibited the utmost of devoted labor, the love of the subject carried to the extremest extent, evincing thereby the most sincere intention and the greatest consideration of the intense purpose which led to the formation of the Brotherhood; a fraternity which, in a very few years, has almost revolutionized the style of Art in England. The influence which the exhibition of these pictures, and their success in securing, of late, the public approbation and admiration, has been most extraordinary;—those only who remember the manner in which the majority of the pictures in the London Exhibition were produced, before the prosecution of this movement, can estimate the greatness of the effect which has resulted from the steady and persevering efforts, the stern persistency of purpose, which has carried all before it in defiance of all sorts of obloquy, by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood.

This result has been the more remark-

able, because those artists who have been compelled to change their style of painting, are not only young men, like the producers of the movement, but many even of the oldest members of the profession, have given signs that they are more or less influenced by it: the reader will consider what a thing this is, that men who have, as occurred in many instances, chosen and deliberately followed out, through the great portion of their lives, one style of art, should feel themselves forced to modify, or entirely alter the whole scope of their efforts, and beginning afresh as it were, not in an easier routine, but in one incomparably more difficult;—retrace their steps and plunge into the most intense labor of finish, when they had become thoroughly habituated to what is too generally, but fallaciously called, the more masterly practice of painting. The unhappy artist who hitherto laid in his skies with a large brush and a softer, stepping back to admire the glorious results of their skill; now has to sit with the painful pencil in hand, and endeavor to render the variety of the tender color of that loveliest canopy which God has spread over his earth.

The heaven-born genius, who had all his life thought that two lines not precisely parallel to each other, would sufficiently represent a leg, has now to study the curvatures of the bones, their articulations, and even the origin and insertion of certain muscles of which he had been previously quite unsuspicious. Painfully they labored; bitter were the execrations, exuberant the wrath and vituperation, with which they denounced that system, or rather deluge, which had set them all afloat. However, time softens all things, and brought its usual result in the case of the English artists. When even the newspaper press, awed by Ruskin, no longer, with universal howl, yelled at the Pre-Raphaelites, these artists found that their unwilling toil was much to their own benefit; they fell into the stream which had set so strongly against them, and now find that there is not much in it: or, according to a remark which we the other day overheard made by one of these unfortunates to a female companion, "You see, my dear, there can't be much in this Pre-Raphaelism, [sic] because so many do it, you know." This saying, orthographically incorrect, contained a world of wisdom:—as far as he saw, it showed an amount of acuteness, for which we certainly never gave the utterer credit, though he had been known to us as a student of many years standing. We say, as far as he saw, because the very picture upon which he had been descanting, much in the Dogberry vein, partook of the Pre-Raphaelite character, only in the semblance of great finish; the finish was but semblance, it was highly stippled but not highly thought upon; every blade of grass was painted,

but, alas! every blade of grass was of the same color,—no reflections of self, or sky, or sun, or water; no tender variety of tint, and scarcely any change of form; it was very perfect grass, nay, almost as perfect as a lady might model in wax, but no accident had befallen it, no rough winds had shaken it, the foot of no animal had crushed it, nor heavy rain broken it to the root; it was fortunate grass which must have lived under a glass case since spring: every blade was like a sword blade, undimmed, unwithered, untorn.

We may take the idea of our artistic friend of the picture in question, as an example of that which prevailed respecting the essentials of a Pre-Raphaelite painting;—the idea that high finish constituted the only departure from the routine class of Art, which the Brotherhood proposed to themselves. This was, however, the very smallest and least important of the changes contemplated by them; far deeper went their intent: not only did they resolve to produce pictures, which, whether highly finished or not, should be so according to circumstances, as far as desirable; but that every part should be studied from nature;—but the most grave of all the changes was that every picture should have a motive in it,—that it should either convey a lesson to the observer, or record some noble act. In fact, meaningless pictures were no longer to be painted by them at least;—such subjects as we so often see under the title of "The Cottage Door," "The Pet Lambs," and similar classes of *genre*, should be, if possible, *painted down*, and overweighed by the stronger power of pictures which really meant something;—pictures such as no man with a heart or a brain could turn from without reflection upon the meaning of the artist in choosing the particular subject, and profit thereby according to his own feelings and conscience.

This was a weighty change, and one well worthy of consideration, for so overrun were the exhibitions at one time with trash of the kind referred to, that it was rare to find in a gallery of perhaps four or five hundred pictures, more than one-tenth to which any meaning whatever could be attached; half of these had nothing but precisely what the title indicated, and the moral thereof could have been just as well indicated by mere symbols.

"Why, for this

What need of Art at all? A skull and bones,
Two bits of sticks nailed cross-wise, or, what's best,
A bell to chime the hour with, does as well."

This was what much of the best of English Art consisted in. Few men sought to show what they felt when looking at Nature;—still fewer sought to transcribe her meanings, and lead the spectator to study God's works for himself. Men seemed to have forgotten that a tree was something more than an abstraction of green and (as generally the trunk and boughs were rendered) brown: in their trees, no birds could have found leafy caverns and labyrinth, they never were the playmates of the winds of summer, or could never wrestle with the storms of winter; if calm water lay in the picture it reflected something which was not the sky, but something which the painter thought would suit his fancy for the *chiaro-oscuro*, or more frequently the realization of his

work. "Let your chief light stand near the centre of your canvass," was the dogma; so they sacrificed everything to this minor incident (thereby saving a great deal of thought and labor), truth of general and individual color, light and shade, detail, brilliancy, and purity of tint. Everything went down before this great principle of focalization. Let your principal figures stand near the centre of your picture, concentrate your interest upon that, make it prominent by every means in your power; if the light and shade arrangements of your picture will not permit of its bearing the highest brilliancy, put it in a white or light colored dress, sink the tones of all the rest so that it may catch the eye before anything else. This will save you a deal of trouble in design, because then the actions of your subordinate characters need not refer too exactly to that of your chief;—put *them* in to fill up vacant spaces, and to sustain the lines of the composition. Let every figure be eight heads and a half high, every man is so of course; or if not, he ought to be, and it is no business of yours, but his misfortune if he be not so. You have little to do with variety of character in form, so stick to the laws of good proportion of eight heads and a half, it is a mystic number. Yet stop! remember that the wonderfully subtle principle of contrast should be expounded, so do not forget to place in the corner of your picture a short person, in order to avoid monotony, as well as to show from what a vast storehouse you draw your materials. As for trees, heed not oaks and beeches, green and brown does them all; there is no variety of color in shadow, which, of course, is essentially transparent, though dark; use asphaltum and lake, this is a fine clear pigment, and enables you to get through your work. Recollect that all shadows, whether from moonlight, or sun-light, or ordinary day, are brown; and that the shadows of artificial light are invariably black. In composition, arrange all your figures in balanced groups, inclining to the pyramid vertically and horizontally, let them be based on curves or circles, according to your fancy; this makes it look pretty, and is thought subtle by the *dilettante*. For color, carefully avoid bright yellows, reds, and greens; nature is horribly vulgar in this respect. But the greatest rule of all for the manifestation of a conventional historical picture is,—to avoid what young ladies call "ugliness," let every man's complexion be clear unless he be a rascal, in that case make him as bilious as you please. You will find the theatre an admirable place of study. Does it not stand to reason that actors must be the best judges of propriety of action and attitude? do they not make this their especial study? Look at ordinary actors off the stage, are they not models of modest propriety of demeanor?—witness the reserved elegance of their manners.

By following such rules as these it is perfectly possible to make a tolerable historical picture in the ordinary way. They are simple, to say the least of them, and avoid every unnecessary trouble of mind; laborious thinking is absurd for an artist:—is he not a poet, and for what are the latter's ten fingers if not to count syllables upon?

These are the principles upon which pictures are too frequently painted;—how different should it be! To the choice of subject

alone, should not much consideration be given, that it be one that shall be worthy of the spending months of a man's life upon;—it should be matter of thought that it may suggest something to the observer beyond a prettiness, which would only become the frontispiece to a Ladies' Book of Fashion. What regions of Poetry and Fact are there to illustrate beyond the ordinary beaten track! How many noble deeds have a moral, and require an expounder?—why go to the antique countries for heroic actions, when such lie at our door every day, lie within our houses and our hearts? Should not the artist *be* the Poet and *create* his own subject? why search the brains of other men?—if a subject is good in itself, and well told, there will be no difficulty in its being understood by the observer;—but, on the contrary, it will be seized upon with avidity as new, as a fresh suggestion, a fresh thought from nature, a fresh flower of imagination. It is the fear of not being understood, which we believe most often deters painters from inventing their own subjects; they are diffident of their own power to illustrate their own thoughts, so fall back upon the thoughts of others, which they presume must be more patent to the many:—yet is not this a mistake? *Are* the thoughts of *writers* more generally discoverable than those of *painters*? It seems to us that they do not need to be, for surely the presentation of a visible scene, in form and color to the eye, is a more advantageous basis for comprehension than when it is only left to the imagination of the reader:—the reader may be profoundly ignorant of many things which are needed to comprehend the subject of a book; history, costume, time and place, all of which the picture presents at a glance. Look, too, at the fascinations of a picture, who does not turn to it?—the veriest child, the greatest boor, the most frivolous women, all find interest in a picture,—whereas not one of them can open a book; nay, utterly loathe reading; yet Art strikes them all. This is a mighty advantage, and will seem the greater the more it is reflected on: in honor of this surely the subject of a picture should be much thought on; let it be such that may not only please, but interest and instruct; not necessarily a sermon, but a record of something that is worth recording.

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."

We will now proceed to describe the efforts made by the members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood to bring about the change in Art to which we have referred, taking the works of each Brother in the order in which we have placed him. Millais' first Pre-Raphaelite picture was from Keat's "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil."

"Fair Isabel, poor simple Isabel!

Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye!
They could not in the self-same mansion dwell
Without some stir of heart, some melody;
They could not sit at meals but feel how well
It soothed each to be the other by;
They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep,
But to each other dream, and nightly weep."

This picture was a banquet scene;—in two rows, by the table, were the guests, each most various in character, and every head studied from some striking nature; one of the murderous brothers sat regard-

ing the love-sick Isabel with askant eyes of jealous anger. The picture was full of fine painting, and a most remarkable work, well auguring the future celebrity of Millais.

The second picture was a supposed incident in the early life of Christ, when a boy, he had been playing in his father's workshop and wounded his hand; the Virgin Mother binds up the wound, while Joseph attentively examines the extent of the injury. Saint John the Baptist, also a boy, approaches eagerly with a vessel of water, which in his haste he spills along the floor: quiet birds are nestling at the window of the room; while, through the open door, some sheep (the type of the faithful), crowd together to gaze within. This work was a vast advance upon the previous one in force and color, as well as in power of design;—it attracted a great deal of notice at the time, and received much vehement abuse, for certain daring peculiarities of drawing, which (to admit what the worst of its detractors could say), were not such as merited their vituperation, or should have been considered for a moment, when before the splendor and the vigor of the other qualities of the picture.

Then came "Ferdinand lured by Ariel," from "The Tempest."

Ferdinand "Where should this music be?
It's the air, or in the earth?"

A small picture; but perhaps one of the most rich in imagination which the painter, even up to the present time, has made public. Ferdinand stands astonished and heedfully listening, while around him go a circle of fantastic wood-spirits led by Ariel; these spirits, by a beautifully subtle suggestiveness, partake in their colors of that against which they "come," as painters say; that is, the background, as it were, showed through them,—by which means a singular ethereal effect was produced. The expression of Ferdinand was most admirable in its intensity. Although, as we have said, this picture was very small, it was probably the most elaborate work of the artist in qualities of finish, every leaf of the woody background, every flower or broken twig, was painted with real thought.

"The Return of the Dove to the Ark" was a remarkable contrast to this last in many respects;—broad in light and shade, rich and pure in color, it developed a new phase in the artist's mind, showing how much the devoted care of the previous work had brought mastery to the pencil. In a chamber, lighted from out the front of the picture, stood two children, caressing a white dove: broad white, green and purple were the main colors of the work; on the floor was some hay, which for richness, delicacy and manipulative power, was a marvel, and as such generally understood.

"The Death of Ophelia" seemed to combine many of the qualities of both the pictures just referred to. Immersed in a deep, slow stream,—through whose sluggish but clear waters her dress was half visible, lay the unhappy lover of Hamlet;—her face, just above the surface, showed her singing her last song, the instant before death came with the overclosing water. "Singing in her song she died." A great beauty of this picture was the bank of the stream

above, a tangled thicket, through which the low sunlight streamed;—wonderful in its intricacy and most elaborate in character, it was one of the most faithful transcripts of nature even Millais had ever made. But the great point of the accessories of the picture was the stream itself; if the reader has ever studied such a thing, he will not fail to have observed the hazy pearliness which water vegetation receives when seen through its own element,—this was admirably rendered, as was the variety of those weeds which floated above. Beautiful in form and expression was the face, and although to our fancy rather highly colored for the subject, it was certainly one of those pieces of flesh-painting which reward a large amount of study. Her dark golden hair spread like a luminous net upon the stream, just sinking below the surface.

"Mariana of the Moated Grange" was, we think, the smallest of all Millais's pictures. It was most perfectly suggestive of the subject;—in an ancient arched room, by an open casement, at an embroidery frame, from which, in the impatient languor of hopeless expectation she had risen, bending backward from the hips, stood her whose life was weary—robed in dark blue, with her face towards you. The melancholy expression of undying hope which was faithless unto itself, hoping without believing,—the eyes reverted from their long watch at the window seemed full of expectation that the ear would warn her of the approach of him "who cometh not;"—the half-opened, eager mouth, which mourned forth that sad complaint, were all there, and all perfectly expressed. In speaking of these pictures, if we were to comment upon the little pieces of incidental poetry, suggested by the introduction, or the elaborate painting of a vast amount of detail, expressive feeling for colors, or light and shade, which frequently are poetical ideas in themselves, and show what has been the degree of thought bestowed upon the subject;—if we were to do this, our paper would greatly exceed the limits of "The Crayon," and exhaust the patience of the reader; it must, therefore, be understood that, of necessity, little of these qualities can be noticed, and that we must confine ourselves to a generally descriptive sketch of each painting.

The subject of "The Order of Release" was an incident presumed to have taken place in the Scotch wars of the Stuarts;—a Highlander has been made prisoner, and borne far from home; to the prison arrives his wife, footsore and weary, but with joy, for she is the bearer of "The Order of Release." The scene is where she gives the paper to the jailor, who, while closely inspecting it, has opened the prison-door and lets the husband come forth to freedom and his wife's embraces; she bears their children, one of whom has fallen asleep (Millais excels in painting children), while in front of the group the household dog leaps up in glad recognition of his master. We have seldom seen finer flesh painting than the legs of the sleeping child, which are so wonderfully rosy and tender, that one resolves that this northern skin certainly had never been painted before, and that Millais is the modern Titian. For the flesh which the latter so gloriously rendered, with its appearance of inner gold, if we may so

speak, was not more perfectly expressive of the man of the South, than many of Millais' wonderful flesh-paintings are of the men of the North;—the white and red, "which Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on."

While we are on the subject of flesh-tints, we may venture to remark the extraordinary influence which the rendering of the golden hue of a southern Italian skin, in so successful a manner by Titian (and so strenuously attempted by those who followed him), has had upon the very eyesight of modern *dilettanti*, who think that all nature is of that color in flesh;—the man of the North, fair and red, they do not see at all; but if man is to be painted, say they, give him an embrowned Italian skin. This was the cause of much of the outcry which was made at first against the way in which the Pre-Raphaelites rendered the skin, as they, with characteristic obduracy, painted literally what they saw. The English public have become accustomed to this now, and flatter themselves that it is the painter who has succumbed to their objections and prejudices; whereas, that the fact is that their eyes have become innocently educated, may be seen whenever a Pre-Raphaelite picture, painted in the heat of this outcry,—and a more recent one,—can be compared. The latter meets with very slight objection on account of the redness of the flesh-tints *now*. That there is some truth in the rendering of the Pre-Raphaelites, may be surmised by the fact, that now, where there are so many, who, though not of the original Brotherhood, have adopted its faith, and produce works on the same principles of literally painting what they see, without sophistication: we say, that every one of these have rendered the skin as of the same northern character:—as there can be no doubt of their sincerity, it follows that every man who joins in this expression of opinion on the subject, adds weight to pronounce for the truth. We do not, of course, mean to say that there appears to be any secret of system in painting thus, which may belong to the Brotherhood and their compeers,—for the flesh-painting of each one is so different as perfectly to express the individuality of their perceptions, and vindicate the thorough independence of the mode of doing it by each man. The methods of flesh-painting pursued by Millais and Hunt are remarkably distinct, yet we recognize both as resembling nature, and are at a loss to say which is the most perfect.

"The Proscribed Cavalier" was a picture representing an incident which might have taken place very frequently during the Rebellion which preceded the Commonwealth in England: as we said before, a cavalier hiding in a tree from his pursuers, is visited by his mistress. The lady yields her hand to the kisses of her lover, and listens anxiously for any sound coming through the wood surrounding them. The trunk of the tree of refuge, an ancient oak, silvered and whitened by age and the lichens, lies full in the blaze of sunlight, and shows like a gigantic specimen of silver ore. The Cavalier, with features besmirched and hair dishevelled, shows what has been his resting-place for a time. Through the broken and leafy underwood, in the freshest green

of nature, the eye penetrates from tree to tree, till lost in the labyrinth of various boughs, while the tall flowers stand between and among the saplings;—for here are trees of every age, from the fresh seedling to the old oak in the chief of the picture,—nor are they of one kind only, not all oaks or all firs, but birches, beeches, ashes and dwarf oaks:—in fact it is a perfect painting from a wild plantation.

At the time of the Massacre of Saint Bartholomew, it is related that an order was issued to all true Catholics, that they should bind round their arms, on the day which is now so deeply stained with blood—the 24th of August—a scarf of white, in order that there might be no mistakes made in the murderous business,—so says the history of that day. Millais has availed himself of this to represent a lady, who has met her lover by a garden-wall, endeavoring to prevail upon him to wear this distinguishing mark; he refuses, and gently repulses her tender anxiety, which would affix the badge with her own hands. The ineffable love and struggling alarm which fill the features of the woman, as most eagerly she strives to insure his safety—half-embracing his arm, while he with his hand thrown over her shoulder, prevents the drawing of the knot—are wonderful; she crouches to him as you may see a feather cling to a wall when pressed by the wind. The tall Huguenot looks down upon her loving face, resolved against her entreaty to wear the badge of the hated faction, though he knows scarcely the object of such earnestness; a grim smile of amusement and gratified affection plays upon his visage. Let not the reader think that this is one of the ordinary class of pictures of lovers' meetings; not so surely;—for this man is none of those whom boarding-school girls, in common with chambermaids, doat upon,—pink and white, with “a beautiful set of teeth;” far from this; he is tall and somewhat grim, grave, dark-haired and sallow, clearly one who can learn as well as fight; you see at once that he is a thinking man, and is not a Huguenot because his father might have been one; you get up a large amount of respect for him, and recognize a man;—a sort of feeling which is, of course, the highest compliment to the painter. You speculate upon what is his position in life;—certainly not a noble (though the lady is, of course); at least, he is not of the character which is only nobly born,—little of that surely. No, his face shows thought and work of the mind: he is, probably (this is our fancy), a member of one of the provincial parliaments, an influential notary-public, a parliamenteer, in fact,—one of those, who, at that time were working out blindly a sort of freedom for France. Perhaps he comes from the South, for there is something Spanish in his countenance, though his figure seems too tall for that. The real beauty of the lady's face does not strike one at first, because of the powerful expression which moves it and absorbs our feelings, yet, if you conceive the features in repose, and its lines ordered and regular, their lovely character becomes apparent. The picture is very rich in sober color, and quite as highly finished as any of the others of which we have spoken. The lovers are shown standing close against an old brick wall over which ivy is hanging, and upon

whose weather-worn surface the spider has left ancient webs, and the lichens are making pale yellow, grey and purple stains. This was the picture which brought Millais into the present height of his reputation. At the Royal Academy, where it was exhibited, crowds stood before it all day, men lingered for hours, and went away to return again and again:—the novelty of the subject, of such universal interest; the splendid manner in which it was treated, all attracted them. The picture clothed the old true heart of man in a new garment, and found universal acceptance and admiration. It is now in course of engraving, and will, when seen in America, through this translation, fully carry out all that has been said, and much more might have been said, if we had allowed ourselves to have been carried away by our admiration.

“The Rescue” was one of those subjects for a picture which are our ideal of the proper functions of art. A Fireman has ventured into a burning house, and brought from their sleeping-places three children, whose mother, in an ecstasy of joy, receives them kneeling on the staircase down which the fireman is pacing, with heavy guarded steps. The man's compressed lips and considerate brow, with the full force of character which his face shows, are just such as become one of those heroes of true courage who venture their lives for others, and whose vocation is in deeds of merciful bravery. The lovely face of the lady, transported with rapturous joy and gratitude, is turned upward towards him and her children, whom she is about to take into her arms. The fire-hose goes up the staircase, upon which are fallen several burning brands, while its upper part is filled with smoke;—the luminous glare shines upon all, and is most startling in its brilliancy; indeed, this power of color was what distinguished the picture as much as the expressions and forcible manner of painting. You see through the window, which lights the stairs, a roof, upon which dawn is just struggling with broad moonlight. The children's faces are admirable in varied expression, and each one shows an individuality of character, while their attitudes are separate, expressive, and distinct.

“Peace concluded, 1856,” was a large picture of a matrimonial reconciliation:—the husband lies upon a sofa, with *The Times* in his hand, while reclining against his chest sits his wife, caressing him; her face shows that preliminaries have been exchanged, and that the troubled waters are fast subsiding, while round the mouth a few poutings linger, as the last waves dash upon the shore after a storm. Two children, who stand by, are puzzled by the tempest, which one evidently resents upon its father, upon whom it gazes earnestly. The whole picture was a novel and rich example of powerful color, such as has been seldom seen in modern times, it wanted the finish which had previously distinguished the paintings of Millais; this was the more to be regretted as it was probably the most successful piece of coloring he had produced.

“The Blind Girl” was a novel subject:—a blind beggar-girl, with a companion, are sitting on a bank by the side of a country road; all the land beyond lies in a flood of sunshine, up to the high horizon,

where stands a village: in the sky a huge dark cloud is pouring a heavy shower upon the earth, but producing a brilliant rainbow, which spans the human habitations and the village church. The girl's face is full of innocence and unconscious contentment; she sees not, and does not need to see the radiant promise of peace and deliverance from trouble which rests its feet upon the earth. Her companion, a girl also, regards this in innocent delight. The whole picture had a peculiar truth of daylight effect, which made it a striking study.

“The Child of the Regiment” was a charming little picture of an incident in the French Revolution, where some of the populace, attacking a church, which is defended by the military, have wounded a soldier's child, which, wrapped in the father's coat, has just sobbed itself to sleep on the ancient tomb of a knight; the tears of pain have ceased to trickle down its face, and the little sobbings sunk to rest. The tomb of alabaster mainly of white, with various tones of pale greys, purples and other low tints, filled nearly the whole of the picture, and was the means of illustrating a curious and novel experiment in color, by somewhat reversing the ordinary arrangement. (This occurred, also, though not in so marked a degree, in the “Blind Girl.”) The tale of the picture was told by showing some soldiers firing out of a window in the church.

Of all the pictures Millais has painted, unquestionably the most impressive was that which we shall notice as the last he has yet produced,—“The Burning of Autumn Leaves.” By the margin of a valley-wood stand four fate-like children, who are burning fallen leaves with fire; they have gathered a fresh heap, from which the smoke creeps upward, while one continues to add more and more. The sun has sunk and dark night cometh, the whole valley is full of a luminous mist, out of which stark, denuded poplars rise at intervals, standing sharp against the sky, which has been golden, but now faded to a dun brassiness, while in the zenith is the black-purple of night: “For the night cometh in which no man can work.” The children's faces are turned from the glowing west, and are in the shadow;—there is a strange impassivity upon them, as if they knew not what they did, senseless instruments of fate, not foolish, but awfully still and composed;—they gather the leaves and cast them upon the pile, half unconscious of the awful threat:

“For wickedness burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briars and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest; and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke.”

“Through the wrath of the Lord of hosts is the land darkened, and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother.”

Nothing more awful than this picture can be conceived, or out of fewer materials have we ever seen so much expressed. You might take it either way;—as a beautiful study of a peculiar effect of nature, such as is rarely painted, and a triumph that way; or might conceive it as we have attempted to describe.*

* To be concluded in the December Number.